THE

GOOD OLD WAY:

OR, THE

RELIGION of our FOREFATHERS,

AS EXPRESSED IN THE

ARTICLES, LITURGY, and HOMILIES

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

WITH SUBSTANTIAL

PROOFS FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

Briefly Diſplaying, in Three SECTIONS,

I. Man's RUIN occaſioned by SIN;
II. His RECOVERY, effected by CHRIST; and
III. His GRATITUDE, expreſſed by OBEDIENCE.

By GEORGE BURDER.

Thus ſaith the LORD, ſtand ye in the Ways, and ſee, and aſk for the OLD Paths, where is the GOOD WAY, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find Reſt for your Souls. *Jerem.* vi. 16.

If unto the Authorities drawn out of the Scriptures, a true Diſcovery were added of that Religion which antiently was profeſſed in this Kingdom, it might prove a ſpecial Motive to induce my poor Countrymen to conſider a little better of the OLD and TRUE Way, from whence they have hitherto been miſled:

Archbiſhop Uſher.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE deſign of this little piece is, to diſplay, in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, the method of a ſinner's ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt. To ſhew, that fallen man is a ruined, helpleſs creature —that he can be juſtified only through faith in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and that every juſtified perſon is powerfully inclined to maintain good works.

Theſe important truths cannot, perhaps, be better expreſſed, than in words borrowed from the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church of England. They demand a preference, not only becauſe they are remarkably nervous and ſtriking, but alſo becauſe many who have hitherto been prejudiced againſt theſe Doctrines, may, it is hoped, be inclined to think better of them, when they find that they are the ſtandard Doctrines of their own Church.

Our excellent Reformers, in order to "avoid diverſities of opini-"ons, and to eſtabliſh conſent touching true Religion," drew up, and publiſhed, in the year 1562, A Summary of their religious principles. It conſiſted of XXXIX Articles. They were agreed upon by the Archbiſhops and Biſhops of both Provinces, and the whole Clergy in Convocation aſſembled.

To this day, every Miniſter of the Church of England ſubſcribes theſe articles. "He acknowledges all and every one of them to be "agreeable to the Word of God." He affirms, that he doth wil-"lingly and *ex animo* ſubſcribe them." He publicly declares before the congregation, his "unfeigned aſſent and conſent to them."

And leſt any, through diſaffection to the truth, ſhould maintain, that the Articles are ambiguous—admit of a certain latitude—or, are capable of various ſenſes, it was wiſely ordained, by his Majeſty's declaration, prefixed to the Articles, "That no man hereafter ſhall "either print or preach to draw the Article aſide any way, but ſhall "ſubmit to it in the *plain* and *full* meaning thereof—and ſhall not "put his own ſenſe or comment to be the meaning of the Article, but "ſhall take it in the *literal* and *grammatical* ſenſe." And of ſuch vaſt importance are the Articles deemed by the Church, that ſhe declares by the Vth Canon, "that whoſoever ſhall affirm, That any "of the Nine and Thirty Articles are in any part ſuperſtitious or "erroneous, ſhall be excommunicated *ipſo facto*; and not reſtored, "but only by the Archbiſhop, after his repentance, and public re-"vocation of ſuch his wicked errors"

Notwithſtanding all this, it is too obvious to need a proof, that the grand peculiarities of the Reformation are kept out of ſight. And this muſt appear awfully evident, to thoſe who compare the modern ſtile of preaching with the articles and liturgy. Hence it has come to paſs,

pass, that the common people, (tho' they retain a great veneration for the church), are, in general, ignorant of her fundamental principles: and that those who profess to preach them, are despised for their pains, and branded with opprobious names.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to let the plainest people know what are the doctrines of their church; and that what too many have rejected, as new and false, is really the OLD and TRUE WAY, perfectly agreeable to the Word of God, and to the standards of the Church of England.

If, indeed, these Articles consisted of trifling speculations, or non-essentials in religion, it were pity to trouble any body about them; but, they contain matter of the greatest importance. The learned and pious authors of them, justly considered the DOCTRINES therein contained more precious than their substance, their liberty, or their lives. Hence some of them become Martyrs for Christ, and sealed the testimony of their lips and pens with the blood of their hearts.

When their offspring, wise in their own conceit, departed from these constitutional principles, they departed also from their correspondent practices; for error and vice, (like truth and virtue), go hand in hand. And we may justly charge the abundant profaneness of the present age, upon its apostacy from the doctrines of the BIBLE.

If this be the true state of things, it becomes the duty of every lover of God, of religion, and his country, to do the utmost in his power, for the revival of the doctrines of the Reformation, as the most likely means to procure a reformation of manners: and with this simple view, the following pages are published.

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§ I. MAN's RUIN OCCASIONED BY SIN.

"KNOW THYSELF," is a maxim admitted and admired by all the world. And happy would it be if Self-knowledge were universally sought, and sought (where it only can be found), in the WORD OF GOD. An excellent summary of what Revelation says on this head, is presented to us in the IXth Article.

Of ORIGINAL or BIRTH-SIN.

"ORIGINAL SIN standeth not in the *following* of Adam, (as "the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the FAULT and CORRUP-"TION of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of "the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from ori-"ginal righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so "that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore "in every person born into this world, it deserveth GOD's WRATH

" and DAMNATION. And this infection of nature doth remain;
" yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the luſt of the fleſh,
" called in Greek *phronema ſarkos*, which ſome do expound, *the*
" *Wiſdom*, ſome *Senſuality*, ſome *the Affection*, ſome *the Deſire of the*
" *Fleſh*, is not ſubject to the law of God. And although there is
" no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized; yet the
" apoſtle doth confeſs, that concupiſcence and luſt hath of itſelf
" the nature of ſin."

In this Article we are told *What Original Sin is not*, and *What it is*. It is not, a mere *imitation* of Adam: It does not conſiſt in following a bad *example*; but it is the *fault* and *corruption* of the very *nature* of all Adam's poſterity. We are hereby taught,

I. That the nature of every man is extremely and totally depraved.
II. That this natural corruption ariſes not from evil habits or examples, but from the fall of Adam.
III. That we are thereby juſtly expoſed to God's wrath and damnation.

I. The nature of every man in the world is extremely, yea, totally depraved.

The word of God repreſents the heart as the fountain of all thoſe evils which are diſcovered in words and actions. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked*, Jer. xvii. 9. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theſts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies*. Matt. xv. 18, 19. *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart*, Gen. vi. 5, 6.

Now this is the caſe not of ſome, or of many, but of *all* mankind univerſally, without diſtinction or exception. The nature of all is equally depraved, though ſome are reſtrained by the power of God from actions atrociouſly evil in the ſight of men. *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God. They are all gone aſide, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good, no not one*, Pſalm xiv. 1, 2.

Thus alſo ſpeaks the Church in different parts of the Liturgy. " There is no health in us. We are tied and bound with the chain
" of our ſins. Through our ſins and wickedneſs we are ſore let and
" hindered. May it pleaſe thee, that by the wholeſome medicines
" of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diſeaſes of our ſouls may
" be healed."

Thus alſo ſpeak the HOMILIES. That on the Miſery of Man affirms, that " Of ourſelves, and by ourſelves we have NO GOOD-
" NESS, HELP, or SALVATION, but, contrariwiſe, ſin, damna-
" tion, and death everlaſting." The Homily on Chriſt's Nativity has

has theſe words: "As before (the fall, Adam) was moſt *beautiful* "and *precious*; ſo now he was moſt *vile* and *wretched*. Inſtead of "the *image of* GOD, he was now become the IMAGE OF THE "DEVIL. Inſtead of the *citizen* of heaven, he was now become "the BONDSLAVE OF HELL. Having no one part of his former "purity and cleanneſs; but being altogether SPOTTED and DE-"FILED, inſomuch that he now ſeemed to be nothing but A "LUMP OF SIN."

This humbling truth might be further proved by the inſtitution and uſe of BAPTISM, which is acknowledged to be "an outward "viſible ſign, of an inward and ſpirtual grace." In the Catechiſm, Water is ſaid to be the viſible ſign in Baptiſm: And the inward grace is, "a death unto ſin, and a new birth unto righteouſneſs." It is plain therefore, that if we were not *born in ſin*, we need not be *born again*—that, if infants themſelves were not unclean, they would not need that ſpiritual waſhing, which is typified by Baptiſm. But here let the reader beware of miſtakes. Baptiſm with water is but the type of the SPIRIT's Baptiſm. He that is born again, is *a new creature*. *Old things are done away, all things are become new*. If this be not the caſe with you, your Baptiſm will not profit your ſoul; you are yet in a ſtate of nature.

Biſhop Beveridge, (a very learned and holy man), ſpeaking upon this ſubject, has the following memorable words:—

"I do not only betray the inbred venom of my heart, by poiſoning "my *common* actions, but even my moſt *religious* performances alſo, "with ſin. I cannot pray, but I ſin; I cannot hear, or preach a "ſermon, but I ſin; I cannot give an alms, or receive the ſacra-"ment, but I ſin: Nay, I cannot ſo much as confeſs my ſins, but "my very confeſſions are ſtill aggravations of them; my repent-"ance needs to be repented of, my tears want waſhing, and the "very waſhing of my tears needs ſtill to be waſhed over again with "the blood of my Redemer."

II. The corruption of man's nature ariſes not from evil habits or example, but from the fall of Adam.

Thus the ſcriptures declare, *Rom* v. 12. *By one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that* (or, IN WHOM, that is, in Adam) *all have ſinned*. The Apoſtle is here ſhewing *why all die*; the reaſon is, becauſe *all have ſinned*. But it is certain *ſome* die, who have not ſinned *actually*, ver. 14. *Death reigned over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion*. Now can we ſuppoſe that a good and righteous God would ſeal the death-warrant of multitudes of new-born babes, if their natural depravity did not render them proper ſubjects of diſſolution? Or, if there was not a fatal connection between them and the firſt ſinner? In ſhort, it is aſſerted, *Rom*. v. 19. *By one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners*.

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The HOMILIES agree with the Scriptures in the confirmation of this doctrine. Obſerve the following paſſages. "As in Adam all "men univerſally ſinned, ſo in Adam all men univerſally received "the reward, of ſin." "Oh! what a miſerable and woeful ſtate "was this, that the ſin of one man ſhould deſtroy and condemn all "men; that nothing in all the world might be looked for, but "only pangs of death, and pains of hell!" *See the Homily on the Nativity of Chriſt.*

Let none object to this important truth, and deem it unjuſt that we ſhould ſuffer through Adam's fault. It ought to ſilence every murmur, that, *The judge of all the earth does right.* Beſides, it ſhould be remembered, that had Adam, as the head and repreſentative of his poſterity, perſevered in obedience, our happineſs would have been thereby for ever ſecured. "To this (ſays an excellent divine), I preſume none would have objected. And if they *would not* to the one, they *ought not* to the other."

Above all, conſider that Chriſt Jeſus is the ſecond Adam; and that, as by one man's DISOBEDIENCE many were conſtituted SINNERS, in the ſame manner, (that is, by *imputation*), by the OBEDIENCE of one, ſhall many be made RIGHTEOUS.

III. We obſerve from this Article, that ſinful man is now juſtly expoſed to God's wrath, and damnation.

The apoſtle Paul aſſures the Epheſians, that they *were by nature* CHILDREN OF WRATH. It is alſo written, *By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men, to* CONDEMNATION, *Rom.* v. 18. And thus ſays the Church, in the Homily upon Chriſt's Nativity:—"All men "univerſally in Adam, were nothing elſe but a wicked and crooked "generation, rotten and corrupt trees, ſtony ground, full of brambles and briars, loſt ſheep, and prodigal ſons, naughty and unprofitable ſervants, unrighteous ſtewards, workers of iniquity, "the brood of adders, blind guides, ſitting in darkneſs and in the "ſhadow of death: to be ſhort, nothing elſe but CHILDREN OF "PERDITION, and INHERITORS OF "HELL-FIRE." "This "ſo great and miſerable a PLAGUE, if it had only reſted on "Adam, might the better have been borne; but it fell not only "on him, but alſo on his *poſterity* for ever: ſo that the *whole "brood* of Adam's race ſhould ſuſtain the ſelf-ſame FALL and "PUNISHMENT."

It ſeems unneceſſary, and indeed almoſt impoſſible, to add any thing to theſe teſtimonies; unleſs it be a ſentence of Biſhop Hall's, who ſtiles a wicked man, "HALF A BEAST, and HALF A "DEVIL;" becauſe a natural man, unchanged and unreſtrained by the grace of God, unites in himſelf the *ſenſual appetites* of a beaſt and the *wicked tempers* of a devil. If ſuch a creature deſerves not God's wrath, it will be hard to ſay who does, or who can.

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With respect to the latter part of the Article, *viz* that, "this "infection of nature remains, even in the regenerated," it needs little proof, the best of men having awfully evidenced it; and none but those who are strangely deceived, can possibly deny it. If any do, the apostle John, 1 Epist. i. 8. says, *If we*, (even believers, himself included), *if we say WE have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*—And not only is sin *in* us, but too often the most serious Christian is constrained to acknowledge, that the *law in his members* not only *rebels* against the *law of his mind*, but (sometimes alas!) brings him into CAPTIVITY *to the law of sin, which is in his members.* Then, with the spirit as well as the words of St. Paul, he cries, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death*, Rom. vii. 25.

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§§ II. MAN's RECOVERY, EFFECTED BY CHRIST.

THE description already given of man's miserable state by nature, is indeed a gloomy one; and might well cause the sensible heart to sink and despair, were there not a most gracious, suitable, and all-sufficient Remedy provided. This is briefly, but excellently, held out in the XIth Article.

Of the JUSTIFICATION of MAN.

"We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own "works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith "only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as "more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."

As this Article is of inconceivable importance, let us attentively consider its several parts.

I. What it is to be *accounted righteous before God.*

II. That we are not accounted righteous *for our own works or deservings.*

III. That we are accounted righteous *for the merit of Christ.*

IV. That this merit or righteousness becomes ours *by faith.*

V. That this doctrine is both *wholesome* and *comfortable.*

I. We are to examine what is meant by being *accounted righteous before God.* And here observe, RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A PERFECT CONFORMITY TO THE HOLY LAW OF GOD. That law of God, which is contained in the ten commandments. Which commandments require, PERFECT LOVE TO GOD, and PERFECT LOVE TO MAN,

MAN. An unſinning obedience. Without a ſingle failure in thought, word, or deed, and a continuance in this perfect obedience through life. The law makes no allowances. It has no reſpect at all to human infirmity. It does not ſay, "Do as well as "you can." But, "Do this—Do it all—Do it always. If you "do, you ſhall live. If you do not, you ſhall die." *Moſes deſcribeth the righteouſneſs which is of the law, That the Man who doth theſe things,* (all and every one of them) *ſhall live by them,* Rom. x. 5. On the other hand, read the conſequence of a *ſingle failure,* Gal. iii. 10. *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe; for it is written, CURSED is EVERY ONE that CONTINUETH not in ALL things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

Now we are moſt certain, that NO fallen man ever obeyed this law perfectly. God himſelf declares, *There is NONE righteous,* (in himſelf) *no NOT ONE,* Rom. iii. 10. The conſcience of every man in the world ſays the ſame. "YOU are not righteous. You "have often *confeſſed* you was a ſinner. By your own mouth there-"fore you ſtand condemned." Now, *the wages of ſin,* (of every ſin) *is DEATH.* Death eternal, *Rom.* vi. 23. It matters not for any one to ſay, "I am better than others; I have not committed "ſuch and ſuch a crime." The queſtion is, have you kept the whole law, or have you not? If you have not, you are UNRIGHTEOUS; ſo ſays St. James, chap. ii. 10. *Whoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in ONE point, he is guilty of ALL. For he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid alſo, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a tranſgreſſor of the law.* If a criminal ſhould be found guilty of MURDER, in a court of juſtice, it would anſwer no purpoſe if he were to plead that he had not committed HIGH TREASON. It is enough to convict a ſinner, and juſtify the ſentence of eternal death, that he has broken the law in ONE point; he is therefore an UNRIGHTEOUS man. Now God will never account a man righteous, if he is unrighteous. —Therefore,

II. *We are not* (we cannot be) *accounted righteous before God, for our own works or deſervings.*

There is no truth in the Bible more frequently inſiſted upon than this. Read the following paſſages, and remember that they are the word of God ——*By GRACE are ye ſaved—NOT OF WORKS, leſt any man ſhould boaſt,* Eph. ii. 8. *By the deeds of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in HIS SIGHT,* Rom. iii. 20. *Knowing that a man is not juſtified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt; even we have believed in Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by the faith of Chriſt, and not by the works of the law: for* BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED, *Gal.* ii. 16. Theſe ſcriptures muſt be deciſive with you, if you believe the word of God.

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The Liturgy ſpeaks the ſame language. It ſays, " O Lord " God who ſeeſt that we put not our truſt in ANY THING thatwe " do." Again, " We lean ONLY upon the hope of thy heavenly " grace." So alſo in the Communion Service, " We do not pre- " ſume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, truſting in OUR " OWN righteouſneſs."

The Homily on the Miſery of Mankind ſays, " Let us know our " own works, of what imperfection they be, and then we ſhall not " ſtand *fooliſhly* and *arrogantly* in our own conceits, nor challenge " ANY PART of juſtification, by our own merits or works."

The ſecond part of the Homily of Salvation ſays, " Juſtification " is not the office of man, but of God; for man cannot make him- " ſelf righteous by his own works, NEITHER IN PART, NOR IN " THE WHOLE; for that where the greateſt ARROGANCY and " PRESUMPTION of man, that Antichriſtcould ſet up againſt God, " to affirm that man might, by his own works, take away and " purge his own ſins, and ſo juſtify himſelf."

Having fully proved that we are not accounted righteous before God, for our own works or deſervings, we proceed to ſhew,

III. *That we are accounted righteous, for the merit,* or righteouſneſs, *of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

The prophet Daniel, chap. ix. 24. ſpeaking of Meſſiah, ſays, *He ſhall finiſh tranſgreſſion—make an end of ſin—make reconciliation for iniquity—and bring in* EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS. All this, Chriſt Jeſus actually performed. We are told, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. that *He was made SIN FOR US, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God IN HIM.* What a bleſſed exchange! Chriſt Jeſus, the righteous one, takes *our ſin*, and ſuffers for it! We unholy ſinners, take *his righteouſneſs*, and are juſtified by it! Hereby we are not merely ſaid to be made *righteous*—but RIGHTEOUSNESS itſelf: nor that only, but the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. Becauſe Chriſt Jeſus is GOD—THE TRUE GOD—THE MIGHTY GOD—JEHOVAH, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. See 1 *John* i. 14. *John* v. 20. *Iſa.* ix. 6. *Jer.* xxiii. 6.

The Homilies are remarkably explicit on this head. Chriſt Jeſus paid " The price of our redemption, by the offering of his " body, and ſhedding of his blood, with FULFILLING OF THE " LAW perfectly and thoroughly." In another part of the ſame Homily, we are informed, that God " provided a ranſom for us, " that was the moſt precious body and blood of his own dear and " beloved Son, Jeſus Chriſt: who, beſides his ranſom, FULFIL- " ED THE LAW FOR US PERFECTLY." Take one more paſſage, than which nothing can be plainer, or more to the purpoſe: " Chriſt is now become the righteouſneſs of all them that do truly

" believe in him. HE, FOR THEM, PAID THE RANSOM, BY " HIS DEATH. HE, FOR THEM, FULFILLED THE LAW IN " HIS LIFE." Hence, and hence *only*, are we accounted righteous before God. Let us now prove, in the next place,

IV. That this Merit or Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, becomes ours BY FAITH.

Thus ſaith St. Paul, *Rom.* iii. 22. *The Righteouſneſs of God is BY FAITH, unto all, and upon all them that believe. By grace are ye ſaved, through FAITH,* Eph. ii. 8. *He that BELIEVETH, ſhall be ſaved; he that believeth not, ſhall be damned,* Mark xvi. 16. *Where is boaſting, then? it is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of FAITH. Therefore we conclude that a man is juſtified by FAITH, without the deeds of the law,* Rom. iii. 27, 28. —Let this truth be further confirmed by the Homilies.

" This righteouſneſs, which we ſo receive of God's mercy, and " Chriſt's merits, EMBRACED BY FAITH; is taken, accepted, " and allowed of God, our perfect and full juſtification."——— " St. Paul declareth here nothing upon the belief of man concern- " ing his juſtification, but ONLY A TRUE AND LIVELY FAITH. " ———Yet that faith doth not ſhut out repentance, hope, love, " dread, and the fear of God to be joined with faith, in every man " that is juſtified; but it ſhutteth them out from the office of juſti- " fying.———It excludeth them, ſo that we may not do them to " this intent, to be made juſt by doing them."

But let the reader carefully obſerve, that man is not ſaved by the MERIT of his faith, any more than by the merit of his works. *Faith is the gift of God*; and it is impoſſible to merit any thing of God, by what we receive *from* him; nay, we are told, *Rom.* iv. 16. *Therefore it is of FAITH, that it might be by GRACE*; and if it be of grace, merit of every kind is wholly and for ever excluded. *Rom.* xi. 6.—It remains now to ſhew,

V. That the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, *is a moſt wholeſome doctrine, and very full of comfort.*

That this is *wholeſome* we may ſafely affirm, becauſe it is a truth of God; and it would be blaſphemy of the foulеſt kind, to charge a licentious tendency upon God's precious truth. EXPERIENCE too proves, that it is wholeſome. The vileſt of mankind have been wonderfully changed upon their belief of it. And it is worth notice that people of the worſt character in the world—the profane—the drunken—the debauched, yea, wretches at the gallows, are, in general, advocates for juſtification by works; while thoſe, whoſe lives are the moſt holy and ſelf-denied, abhor the idea of merit. See *Rom.* vi.

The Church of England ſays further, that this doctrine is *comfort-*

fortable, yea, *very full of comfort*. And so says St. Paul, *Rom.* v. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*. We read also of *joy and peace IN believing*; and of *joy unspeakable and full of glory*. The preaching of salvation by merit of human works, may suit a whole-hearted person, one who never knew God, the law, or himself, but it would drive a convinced sinner to despair. The convinced jailer, *Acts*. xvi. 25. &c. who asked with the utmost anxiety, *What must I do to be saved?* was directed only, *to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*; which, when he had done, it is said, *he rejoiced with all his house*.

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§ III. THE GRATITUDE OF THE REDEEMED, EXPRESSED BY OBEDIENCE.

THE Gospel method of Salvation, exhibited in the foregoing pages, is divinely calculated, not only to rescue man from misery, but to glorify God the Saviour: and that, not only by the harmony and lustre of his attributes, but by causing the subjects of his rich mercy *to shine before men, that the world, beholding their good works, may glorify their heavenly Father*. This doctrine is charmingly displayed in the XIIth Article.

Of GOOD WORKS.

"Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, canno put away our sins, and endure the "severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable "to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively "faith; insomuch, that by them a lively faith may be as evidently "known, as a tree discerned by the fruit."

If this Article be rightly understood, it will stop the mouth of every one who objects to justification by faith, as though it were a doctrine destructive of good works. That we may understand it well, let us see,

I. What good works are: then observe,

II. That they are the fruits of faith. But,

III. That the best works of the best men have no share in justification; yet,

IV. That they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ; and,

V. That they prove our faith to be good.

It is greatly to be feared, that many know not,

I. What good works are. All is not gold that glitters. That any work be accounted good by God, it must flow, 1. From a good

principle. Man looketh at the outward appearance, the Lord looketh at the heart. He accepts not the forced obedience of a ſlave, but the loving duty of a child. 2. A good work is done by a good *rule.* God will not accept that which he never required. God's word, not man's fancy, is the proper rule of obedience. 3. The *end* or *aim* of any work muſt be good, or the work itſelf bad. God's glory is the noble end of chriſtian obedience. Woe be to him whoſe praying, faſting, alms, &c. are to eſtabliſh a religious character among mortals, or to merit the favour of God. This will more evidently appear by conſidering,

II. That good works are the fruits of Faith.

1. None but a believer can do a good work. Every unbeliever is deſtitute of a good principle—does not work by a good rule—does not aim at a right end. The ſcripture poſitively affirms, that *they that are in the fleſh, cannot pleaſe God,* Rom. viii. 8. And again, *Without Faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to pleaſe God,* Heb. xi. vi. Nay more, *Whatſoever is not of Faith, IS SIN,* Rom. xiv. 23.. Which paſſages fully juſtify the excellent words of our Reformers, in the XIIIth Article.

" Works done before the grace of Chriſt, and the inſpiration of " his Spirit, are not pleaſant to God, foraſmuch as they ſpring not " of faith in Jeſus Chriſt, neither do they make men meet to re- " ceive grace, or (as the ſchool-authors ſay) deſerve grace of con- " gruity: yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath " willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they " have the nature of ſin."

Biſhop Beveridge expreſſes the ſame truth, in the following moſt ſtriking words: " 'Tis a matter of admiration to me, how any one, " that pretends to the uſe of reaſon, can imagine that he ſhould be " accepted before God for what comes from himſelf! For, how is " it poſſible that I ſhould be juſtified by good works, when I can " do no good works at all before I be firſt juſtify'd? My works " cannot be accepted as good, 'till my perſon be ſo; nor can my " perſon be accepted by God, 'till firſt engrafted into Chriſt; be- " fore which engrafting into the true Vine, it is impoſſible I ſhould " bring forth good fruit; for *the plowing of the wicked is ſin,* ſays " Solomon, *Prov.* xxi. 4. yea, *the ſacrifices of the wicked are an* " *abomination to the Lord,* chap. xv. 8. And, if both the *civil* and " *ſpiritual* actions of the wicked be ſin, which, of ALL their acti- " ons, ſhall have the honour to juſtify them before God." Thus we ſee, that an unbeliever, a man without true faith, does not—cannot perform good works. It is equally true, 2. That good works are " the fruits of faith, and follow after juſtification." Read and remember the following ſcriptures. *FAITH WORKETH BY LOVE,* Gal. v. 6 *This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will that*

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thou affirm conſtantly, that THEY WHICH HAVE BELIEVED *in God, might be careful to maintain* GOOD WORKS, Tit. iii. 8. *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we eſtabliſh the law*, Rom. iii. 31. The whole 11th chapter of the Hebrews might be introduced for this purpoſe, but it may be read at leiſure.

The Homilies are very clear and full upon this head. That upon Salvation ſays, "A true and lively faith in Chriſt, bringeth forth "good works, and a life according to God's commandments." Again, "Theſe be the fruits of true faith, to do good, as much as "lieth in us, to every man; and above all things, and in all things, "to advance the glory of God."

"Such is the true faith, that the ſcripture doth ſo much com-"mend, the which when it ſeeth and conſidereth what God hath "done for us, is alſo moved through continual aſſiſtance of the "Spirit of God, to ſerve and to pleaſe him, to keep his favour, to "fear his diſpleaſure, to continue his obedient children, ſhewing "thankfulneſs again, by obſerving or keeping his commandments, "and that freely, for true love chiefly, and not for dread of pu-"niſhment, or love of temporal reward: conſidering how clearly "without deſervings we have received his mercy and pardon freely."

This point being ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, and calling for practice rather than proof, let us proceed to ſhew,

III. That the beſt works of the beſt of men, have no pretenſi-ons to merit, or any ſhare in our juſtification before God.

The Article ſays, *They*, viz. *Good works*—truly ſuch, *the fruits of faith*, even THEY *cannot endure the ſeverity of God's judgment, nor put away ſin.* The beſt work of man's hand, would be found deficient, if weighed in the balance of the ſanctuary. A ſervant merits no thanks from his maſter, for doing his DUTY. Our Savi-our therefore reminded his diſciples, that *When they ſhould have done all that he had commanded*, they ſhould *ſay, We are unprofitable ſer-vants: we have done that which was our DUTY to do*, Luke xvii. 10. The Homily juſt quoted tells us, "We muſt renounce the me-"rit of all our ſaid virtues, of FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, and "all other virtues and good deeds, which we either *have done, ſhall "do, or can do*, as things that be far too weak and inſufficient, and "imperfect, to deſerve a remiſſion of ſins, and our juſtification." Nevertheleſs,

IV. Good works are "pleaſing and acceptable to God in Chriſt." *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf.* God in Chriſt, ſignifies, a reconciled God. He is become ſuch to all who believe. He loves them in his Son. He regards the members, as he regards the

the head. And being in this happy ſtate, what they do out of love to him is exceedingly acceptable. Let us conſult the ſacred oracles, *Rom.* xii. 1. *I beſeech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.* So again, chap. xiv. 18. *He that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.* So ſaith St. Paul in another place: *I have received the things which were ſent from you* (Philippians), *an odour of a ſweet ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable and well-pleaſing to God,* Phil. iv. 18. What a cogent argument, what a forcible inducement this, to all holy, loving obedience! That the God of heaven, takes kindly at our hands, every poor ſervice done from love to his dear name, and out of gratitude for his precious ſalvation. And as a further motive to virtue, let us recollect,

V. That by good works we prove our faith to be good. For "they ſpring NECESSARILY out of a true and lively faith." St. James ſpeaks of a "dead faith;" that is, ſuch a faith as produces no works, chap. ii. 17. *A man may ſay, Thou haſt faith, and I have works.* A good man, a real believer, may detect the counterfeit profeſſor thus: "You ſay that you have faith; *Shew me thy* "*faith WITHOUT thy works*—if you can. *But know O vain* "*man*, that this is impoſſible, for *faith without works is dead* "faith:" it is not the faith of God's elect. Now ſays the true believer, *I will ſhew thee MY faith BY my works*; which is the proper, ſcriptural method of proving it to be truly good. To illuſtrate this matter fully, the Apoſtle proceeds to ſhew that Abraham, the father of the faithful, who was juſtified *by faith* BEFORE GOD, was juſtified *by works* BEFORE MEN. *Was not Abraham juſtified by works*, (before men) *when he had offered Iſaac his ſon upon the altar?* certainly he was. And thereby *was the ſcripture FULFILLED*, (not contradicted) *which ſaith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*; or, as it is in the Hebrew, *Gen.* xv. 6. God *imputed righteouſneſs to him.* Thus it appears, "that "St. James *denies* a man can be juſtified by a *dead faith*, which "St. Paul never affirms; and St. Paul *affirms*, that a man is juſti-"fied by a *living faith*, which St. James never denies; and ſo in-"ſtead of obſcuring, they each contribute to throw light upon that "intereſting point, *the juſtification of a ſinner, in the ſight of God.*" It ought alſo to be noted, that the juſtification of Abraham before God, by faith in the promiſe, was, in point of time, before the birth of his ſon Iſaac, and conſequently twenty years at leaſt before he offered him up, by which action, as a fruit of his faith, he was juſtified before men. Thereby his faith was proved, to be real, ſolid, and ſtrong. And in the ſame manner, that is, by obedience to God's commands, *we* are to prove the ſincerity of our faith, a FAITH, that WORKS by LOVE.

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CONCLUSION.

THESE, dear reader, are ſome of the moſt important doctrines of the goſpel, and of the church of England. The foregoing pages have briefly, but fully proved, That fallen man is entirely ruined by ſin—That his recovery is only effected by Chriſt—and, that the gratitude of a recovered ſoul will be proved by his holy obedience.

And now, permit me to aſk you a ſerious queſtion. Have you ſeriouſly conſidered theſe things? You perhaps was born, baptized, and educated in the church of England; but are you experimentally acquainted with your ſinful ſtate by nature, as here repreſented? Have you been alarmed to ſee your perſonal danger,—that *you*, even *you*, are the fallen, apoſtate, guilty creature, juſtly expoſed to the vengeance of a moſt holy, juſt, almighty and offended God? And has this view of the matter led you to prayer,—ſolemn, fervent, heart-prayer? You have often cried in the church, *Lord, have mercy upon us! Chriſt, have mercy upon us!* Have you offered the ſame petition in private?

If this has been your experience, the language of your heart is, like one of our dying Martyrs, *None but Chriſt; none but Chriſt.* You cannot, you dare not, you *do not preſume to come before God, truſting in your own righteouſneſs.* Gladly will you renounce all dependance on your innocence, church-goings, ſacraments, alms, and ſincere obedience. With St. Paul, the converted phariſee, you will ſay, *What things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt. Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith,* Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9.

Are you thus a believer in Chriſt? You are a happy man! Bleſſed art thou, my friend, for *fleſh and blood hath not revealed theſe things unto you, but your heavenly Father.* How then is your heart affected to your great Deliverer, to your divine Benefactor, to your loving God and Saviour? Does not *the love of Chriſt conſtrain you* to good works? Do you not *thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they who* (like you) *do live* a life of juſtification, *ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him who died for them, and roſe again,* 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

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But it may be, that you live contentedly, yea wilfully ignorant of these matters. You, like *Gallio*, care for none of these things, whether they are true or false. Perhaps you are a man of pleasure: if so, *You are dead while you live:* Dead to God, dead in sin, and doomed to die eternally, by the law of heaven. Or you are filled with the cares of life. Your business and family engross your whole heart, and all your time: like Martha, cumbered about many things; but know this, *One thing is needful*; needful, if you would be saved; even the care of your soul; for *what will you be profited* if you get all you want, yea, *if you could get all the world, and lose your soul at last.*

Some of my readers may be of another cast: Civil in behaviour, diligent in business, moral in your whole conduct, blameless in your character, and at times *devout.* You esteem the sabbath. You frequent the church. You are regular at sacrament. You are charitable to the poor. All this is right; but is this all? Are your hopes of heaven built on these things? Permit me, dear reader, to beg you would examine this foundation of your hopes. Is it not plain, that by depending on yourself, you reject Christ? Can any man lay another foundation than God has laid, even Jesus? And consider what St. Paul says, *Gal.* ii. 21. *I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Surely you do not mean to say that Christ died in vain, you abhor the blasphemy! And yet this is the consequence of self-dependance.

May you be enabled to desist from *going about to establish your own righteousness*, and receive *Christ* by faith, who *is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. May every reader say, Amen.

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FINIS.